

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 0387

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GE, GW, UR

SUBJECT: GDR PROPOSAL FOR S-BAHN NEGOTIATIONS

REF: USBERLIN 302

1. SUMMARY: SENAT HAS CONFIRMED TO GDR THAT IT HAS NO INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS ON S-BAHN, AND GDR HAS RESPONDED WITH NEW THREAT TO REDUCE OR TERMINATE SERVICE. WHILE NEITHR ALLIES NOR SENAT EXPECT ANY SUDDEN DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENTS, SENAT HAS SUGGESTED THAT ALLIED-SENAT WORKING GROUP REVIEW POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF REDUCTION OR TERMINATION OF S-BAHN SERVICE. ALLIES HAVE ALSO AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SENAT REQUEST THAT THEY SPEAK INFORMALLY TO SOVIETS ABOUT MATTER,BUT WILL DELAY SUCH AN APPROACH FOR TIME BEING LEST IT BECOME COFUSED WITH QUESTION OF REICHSBAHN CO MPLIANCE WITH ALLIED ORDER ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN WEST BERLIN INVOLVING CITY'S TRAIN CONNECTIONS TO FRG. END SUMMARY.

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2. SENAT RESPONDED TO GDR FOREIGN OFFICE INVITATION

TO" CONTINUE" DISCUSSIONS ON S-BAHN EITHER FEBRUARY 20 OR 23 BY HAVING VISITS ARRANGEMENT PLENIPOTENTIARY KUNZE SEND BRIEF TELEX TO HIS GDR OPPOSITE NUMBER MITDANK CONFIRMING THAT SENAT POSITION WAS AS STATED BY HIM AT FEBRUARY 12 MEETING, I.E., SENAT DOES NOT WISH TO NEGOTIATE WITH GDR ON SUBJECT FOR WHICH REICHSBAHN AND ALLIES ARE COMPETENT. KUNZE RECEIVED " PERSONAL" LETTER FEBRUARY 24 FROM HIS INFORMAL GDR CONTACT PROFESSOR SEIFFERT WHICH SAID THAT IF SENAT REALLY INTENDED TO REJECT MITDANK'S OFFER IT WAS LIKELY THAT S-BAHN TRAFFIC WOULD HAVE TO BE REDUCED IN WESTERN SECTORS OR CUT OFF ENTIRELY. QUICK SEIFFERT LETTER WAS BIT OF A SURPRISE SINCE HERETOFORE SEIFFERT HAD BEEN SUGGESTING TO KUNZE THAT MITDANK WAS PURSUING FOREIGN OFFICE MAXIMALIST POSITION AND THAT OTHER CHANNELS MIGHT ALSO BE POSSIBLE. HEAD OF SENAT CHANCELLORY HERZ TOLD ALLIED SENAT LIAISON OFFICERS THAT SENAT CONSIDERED SEIFFERT'S LETTER INDICATION THAT THERE IS NO ONLY ONE HARD-LINE GDR POSITION, WHETHER BLUFF OR NOT, AND THAT SENAT HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO CONTINUE TO REFUSE PREJUDICIAL NEGOTIATIONS GDR FOREIGN OFFICE WAS DEMANDING. HE SAID SENAT WOULD SOON MAKE FORMAL PROPOSAL TO ALLIES FOR FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP TO STUDY IMPLICATIONS OF POSSIBLE GDR ACTIONS AND THAT SENAT HOPED ALLIES WOULD IN MEANTIME SPEAK TO SOVIETS.

3. ANY INITIAL GDR ACTION ON S-BAHN WOULD, IN BOTH SENAT AND ALLIED VIEW, MUCH MORE LIKELY BE ALONG LINES OF RATIONALIZATION OF SERVICE, FOR EXAMPLE ELIMINATION OF FEW OF MOST UNPROFITABLE RUNS OR REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF TRAINS, NOT FULL DISRUPTION OF SERVICE. THERE REMAINS POSSIBILITY ALSO THAT GDR ACTION IS ESSENTIALLY A BLUFF IN EFFORT TO OBTAIN HARD CURRENCY BUT THAT GDR WILL NOT, EVEN IF NO MONEY IS FORTHCOMING, VOLUNTARILY RENOUNCE PRESTIGE AND STATUS ADVANTAGES IT GAINS FROM RUNNING S-BAHN IN WEST BERLIN. ALSO, AS NOTED REFTTEL, NEITHER SENAT NOR ALLIES CONSIDER THAT REDUCTION OR TERMINATION OF S-BAHN SERVICE WOULD CREATE PRACTICAL TRANSPORT

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PROBLEM FOR CITY. ALLIED POLADS HAVE AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT A UNILATERAL ACTION WOULD CREATE PUBLIC PRESSURES ON ALLIES TO "DO SOMETHING" SINCE REICHSBAHN'S COMPETENCE OVER S-BAHN STEMS FROM FOUR POWER UNDERSTANDINGS IN IMMEDIATE POST-WAR PERIOD. FROM WESTERN POINT OF VIEW, BEST THING WOULD ALMOST SURELY BE FOR STATUS QUO TO BE MAINTAINED. POLADS WERE INITIALLY RELUCTANT TO CONTEMPLATE APPROACH TO SOVIETS UNTIL

SENAT DESIRES ONGDR PROPOSAL WERE CLEAR. NOW THAT SENAT HAS TAKEN APPARENTLY FIRM FPOSITION, POLADS CONSIDER THAT INFORMAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN CHAIRMAN POLAD AND KHOTULEV MIGHT SERVE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

A) REMIND SOVIETS THAT IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST AS WELL AS OURS THAT GDR NOT TAKE UNILATERAL ACTIONS OF SORT THAT MIGHT REQUIRE ALLIED C OUNTER ACTIONS AND DISTURB QUIET SITUATION THAT HAS MARKED REICHSBAHN OPRATIONS IN WESERN SECTORS IN RECENT YEARS:B) RESERVE ALLIED LEGAL POSITION THAT REICHSBAHN HAS ONLY OPERATING LICENSE IN WESTERN SECTORS, NOT SOVEREIGNTY OVER PROPERTY, IN EVENT THAT ALLIES MIGHT AT SOME POINT IN FUTURE HAVE TO CONSIDER AUTHORIZING SENAT TO TAKE UNDER ITS ADMINISTRATION PROPERTY, SUCH AS STATIONS, THAT REICHSBAHN HAS WITHDRAWN FROM SERVICE;

C) LAY BASIS FOR QUADRIPARTITE COVER TO ANY FUTURE DISCUSSIONS THATSENAT, DESPITE ITS PRESENT POSITION, MAY EVENTUALLY, WISH TO CONDUCT.

4. POLADS CONSIDRED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS NOT IMMEDIATE NEED TO RAISE SUBJECT WITH SOVIETS AND THAT, TACTICALLY, IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO DELAY APPROACH UNTIL AFTER REICHSBAHN CONSTRUCTION QUESTIONS RELATED TO DECEMBER 19 INNER-GERMAN AGREEMENT HAVE BEEN RESOLVED(USBERLIN 378). FOLLOWING ARE TALKING POINTS TENTATIVELY APPROVED BY POLADS FOR USE AT THAT LATER TIME:

A. AS SOVIETS WILL KNOW, GDR FOREIGN OFFICE HAS RECENTLY SOUGHT TO ENGAGE SENAT IN NEGOTIATIONS ON SUBSIDY FOR S-BAHN ALLEGING THAT IT IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE FOR REICHSBAHN TO PROVIDE SERVICE WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT AND THREATENING THAT REICHSBAHN IS NO LONGER PREPARED TO BEAR SOLE COST FOR THIS SERVICE.

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SENAT HAS INFORMED GDR THAT IT HAS NO INTEREST IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS.

B. ALLIES SEE NO NEED FOR ANY NEGOTIATIONS. REICHS-BAHN SERVICES FOR WESTERN SECTORS OF BERLIN WERE AGREED TO BY FOUR POWERS MANY YEARS AGO AND ARE PART OF EXISTING SITUATION IN CITY WHICH ALL SIDES HAVE AGREED SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED UNILATERALLY. THERE IS NO NEED FOR FURTHER AGREEMENTS, CERTAINLY NOT BETWEEN GDR AND SENAT.

C. SOVIETS KNOW OUR VIEWS ON LEGAL STATUS OF REICHSBAHN OPERATIONS IN WESTERN SECTORS, AND WE KNOW THEIRS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE WHATEVER MEASURES WE NEED TO TAKE IN CONCRETE SITUATIONS CONCERNING REICHSBAHN AFFAIRS, BUT WE THINK IT IS IN COMMON QUADRIPARTITE INTEREST AND RESPONSIBILITY THAT REICHSBAHN SITUATION

CONTINUE TO REMAIN QUIET.GEORGE

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